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# **Stephens formally files bill to put paper trail on voting machines**

**ATLANTA** – State Sen. Bill Stephens (R-Canton) filed legislation today to provide a pilot program in three Georgia counties to equip the state's electronic voting machines with voter verifiable paper audit trails in the elections slated for November of this year. Sen. Stephens' legislation, the *2006 Georgia Accountability in Elections Act* will make Georgia one of the first states in the nation with a uniform statewide system of automated touch-screen voting machines capable of producing a paper ballot of every vote cast.

"Voters want to know that their electronically-cast vote counted," Sen. Stephens said at the State Capitol today. "Our voting system is the foundation of our democracy, and the men and women in this state deserve to know that the system is safe and secure."

Bibb, Camden and Cobb are the counties designated to participate in the pilot program, and one precinct in each of the three counties will participate in the 2006 November General Election and any resulting runoff that may occur in the precinct. Within 30 days of the General Election, and any subsequent runoff, an audit shall be performed which will compare the results from the voter verifiable paper audit trail to the documentation recorded by the electronic voting machines. The results of this audit will be made public.

Sen. Stephens first introduced paper trail audit legislation three years ago along with then-majority leader and now Congressman Tom Price.

“We need to test and verify the system so people will believe in its results,” Sen. Stephens concluded.

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*Sen. Bill Stephens of the 27<sup>th</sup> Senate District serves as the Chairman for the Senate Transportation Committee. He may be reached at [bill.stephens@senate.ga.gov](mailto:bill.stephens@senate.ga.gov) or at 404.656.0048. He represents Cherokee and Forsyth counties.*